

Moran Legislation Will Protect Local Immigration Laws

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Jerry Moran will introduce legislation next week to protect state and local governments that enact immigration laws from federal lawsuits. The Respect for Local Laws Act will require the federal government to pay for any legal costs incurred by state or local governments when defending a constitutional challenge to local immigration law brought by the federal government.

“If the Obama Administration will not enforce our immigration laws, it should not stand in the way of state and local governments from doing so,” Moran said. “We are a nation of laws and they must be enforced. Unfortunately, the Obama Administration has shown that it does not respect local efforts to enforce immigration law.”

On July 6, 2010, the U.S. Justice Department sued the State of Arizona in an attempt to block implementation of Arizona’s new immigration law that is to go into effect on July 29, 2010.

The Obama Administration lawsuit comes after President Obama said in a 2009 memorandum to the heads of executive departments and agencies that the federal government “should be mindful that in our Federal system, the citizens of the several States have distinctive circumstances and values, and that in many instances it is appropriate for them to apply to themselves rules and principles that reflect these circumstances and values.”

Arizona has been overrun with illegal immigration and violent crime and kidnappings have harmed many residents. The immigration law now challenged by the Obama Administration seeks to address these circumstances and protect Arizonans.

Moran’s legislation will give state and local governments the confidence needed to address immigration problems by removing the fear of being overwhelmed by the resources of the federal government should a legal challenge occur.

Companion legislation was introduced in the Senate by Senator Mike Johanns (NE).

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